

St. John's Seminary
Lake Street
Brighton, Massachusetts

Father Francis J. McGann,

I am currently doing research on the history of Holy Family Parish, Duxbury, Massachusetts. I have found that Monsignor John Murray Manion was named the first pastor of the parish. In doing background work on Monsignor Manion I found that you were one of the celebrants at his funeral mass. I would greatly appreciate any statement from you regarding the type of priest Monsignor Manion was. Any information of this sort would be most helpful in completing a picture of Monsignor for the history of the Duxbury parish.

Respectfully yours,

Clyde Chetwynde

*H. Paul
147 North Street
02043 - Rungbam, Mass.*

sent in April 1979

Questions:

Background information:

Where were you born?

If you don't mind ,when were you born?

What brought you to Duxbury?

How many years have you lived here?

What was the ~~town~~ like when you arrived?

Can you tell me something about the Cape Verdian population

Can you recall anything about the early Catholic services here in ~~Duxbury~~ Duxbury? Where were they held? How did you get there? What was there for catechetical instruction?

Was there any involvement by the priest of the parish with the parishoners?

About how many members of the early church in Duxbury were there?

Can you tell me something that struck ~~the~~ ~~following~~ you about the following priests and the way they carried out their ministries?

Fr. Manion

Fr Conley

Fr Howard

Fr Crowley

Fr Cloherty

Fr Cosgrove

Fr Turke

What does it mean to you in light of what these men have tried to do to be a Catholic?

What do you want to see the church of tomorrow doing?

Any other information you feel would be helpful to the history of the parish.

St. Paul's Rectory
147 NORTH STREET
HINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 02043

April 23

Dear Rhys,

I am replying to your note concerning
Monsieur Manon.

I served as Monsignor private at Blessed
Sacrament, Walpole, from 1949 to 1952, when he
moved to St. Mary, Manchester. He had come to
Walpole from Duxbury. I remained close to Dr.
Manon through the years. My family home is in
Woburn - right next to Manchester.

Father Manon was a superb priest. He
was totally dedicated to his priesthood. He was
well-organized in everything he did, had a
great sense of humor and a really sharp mind.
He preached only about 5 or 6 minutes at Sunday
Masses. He always had an attention grabber at
the beginning and something memorable at the

end. He was very democratic. Everyone was of
the same importance to him. Harder to say. The
people of Walpole loved him. - as I saw the
people of Duxbury did, too.

Father Manon had a great love for his fellow
priests. He wasn't a great socializer with the laity,
but he really relished being with priests.

He had great foresight. Thirty years ago he had
congregational participation in the Mass - even when
it was still in Latin. And he loved congregational singing.

The enclosed folder has the eulogy which
was preached at his funeral Mass 3 years ago. It
tells you a great deal about the man - He wrote it
himself. The picture says a lot, too. You can
read in it his strength and integrity.

Dr. Manon was a great priest. He had a great
influence on my life - and, I am sure, on the lives of
many other priests and countless laity.

Incidentally, Dr. Frank Trobe, present pastor in
Duxbury, spent many years as a private in Manchester with
Dr. Manon. He will be helpful to you. In Christ,
Good luck in your project. Fr. Frank McEgan

St Paul's Rectory
147 North Street
Hingham, Massachusetts 02043

April 23

Dear Clyde,

I am replying to your note concerning Monsignor Manion.

I served as Monsignor curate at Blessed Sacrament, Walpole, from 1949 to 1952, when he moved to St. Mary, Winchester. He had come to Walpole from Duxbury. I remained close to Fr. Manion through the years. My family house is in Woburn...right next to Winchester.

Father Manion was superb priest. He was totally dedicated to his priesthood. He was well-organized in everything he did, had a great sense of humor and a really sharp mind. He preached only about 5 or 6 minutes at Sunday masses. He always had an attention grabber at the beginning and something memorable at the end. He was democratic. Everyone was of the same importance to him. Needless to say, the people of Walpole loved him....and I'm sure the people of Duxbury did, too.

Father Manion had a great love for his fellow priests. He wasn't a great socializer with the laity, but he really relished being with priests.

He had great foresight. Thirty years ago he had congregational participation in the Mass...even when it was still in Latin. And he loved congregational singing!

The enclosed folder has the eulogy which was preached at his funeral Mass 3 years ago. It tells you a great deal about the man. He wrote it himself!! The picture says a lot too. You can read in it his strength and integrity.

Fr. Manion was a great priest. He had a great influence on my life...and I'm sure, on the lives of many other priests and countless laity.

Incidentally, Fr. Frank Turke, present pastor in Duxbury, spent many years as a curate in Winchester with Fr. Manion,. He'll be helpful to you.

In Christ,

Good luck in your paper

Fr. Frank McGann

full
John
Manion

MY EULOGY.

There is a saying that no one is so dead as a dead priest. I would like to amen that: -there is no one quite so dead as a retired dead priest. So, Fathers, I am very grateful to you for taking out time to attend this funeral Mass. And, if there is anyone among former parishioners and friends who is present, I am doubly grateful to you, for it was not expected.

Of course, this is unusual for a priest to write his own eulogy, but if I didn't do this some other poor priest would be racking his brains, trying to discover virtues that were never mine. In short, they would be deliniating a very untrue picture of me. (Remember I have heard a lot of eulogies, and after each one, I came out with the conviction that my idea was better!)

Right at this moment--while the body I carried around with me is still before the altar, I, the person you knew, the priest who did some things you approved of, and other things you took exception to, -I--am already judged! You haven't even disposed of this body of mine, but my soul, the thing that made me the Father Manion you knew-- THAT is disposed of. I only hope I can pay the debt I owe my God, and then be able to speed to Him, who, after all, made me man and chose me priest.

Naturally, I have said and done things that weren't liked, for to err is human. But I sincerely hope I didn't do anything mean or revengful--to deliberately hurt someone. And how I hope the celestial IBM will show just that.

What disturbs ME is the EFFECT of what I have said or done in the lives of others. Suppose, that because of me some soul was estranged from God, left the church or disdained religion! That would be pretty terrible, wouldn't it? For, my job was to lead souls to God, bring them into the church, make them love this religion of ours. Well, I know the score NOW. It's on the records. That's why you have to pray for me NOW before you leave the church--that God may take into consideration my weaknesses and my honest desire to do the best I could for Him.

For a long time, now. I have told God each day after Mass that I was grateful to Him for allowing me to say Mass--so many of you lay people must have seemed better celebrants! And I offered it in reparation for the many times I have disregarded His wishes. You'll see, at the General Judgment! A week ago I would have minded terribly that you should know me as I really am. Not now!! Such pitiful revelations are too inconsequential in the face of Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory.

Again, I am humbly grateful to you for coming here today. Thank you very much indeed. Keep me in your good prayers and Masses. When I get up there, I will try to pay you back.

So, priests and people: Goodbye! You'll go back to your rectories, the Regina Cleri, and your homes and take up your routine life of mortal man. While I, --why I have already begun the greatest adventure of my existence! God love you all!

